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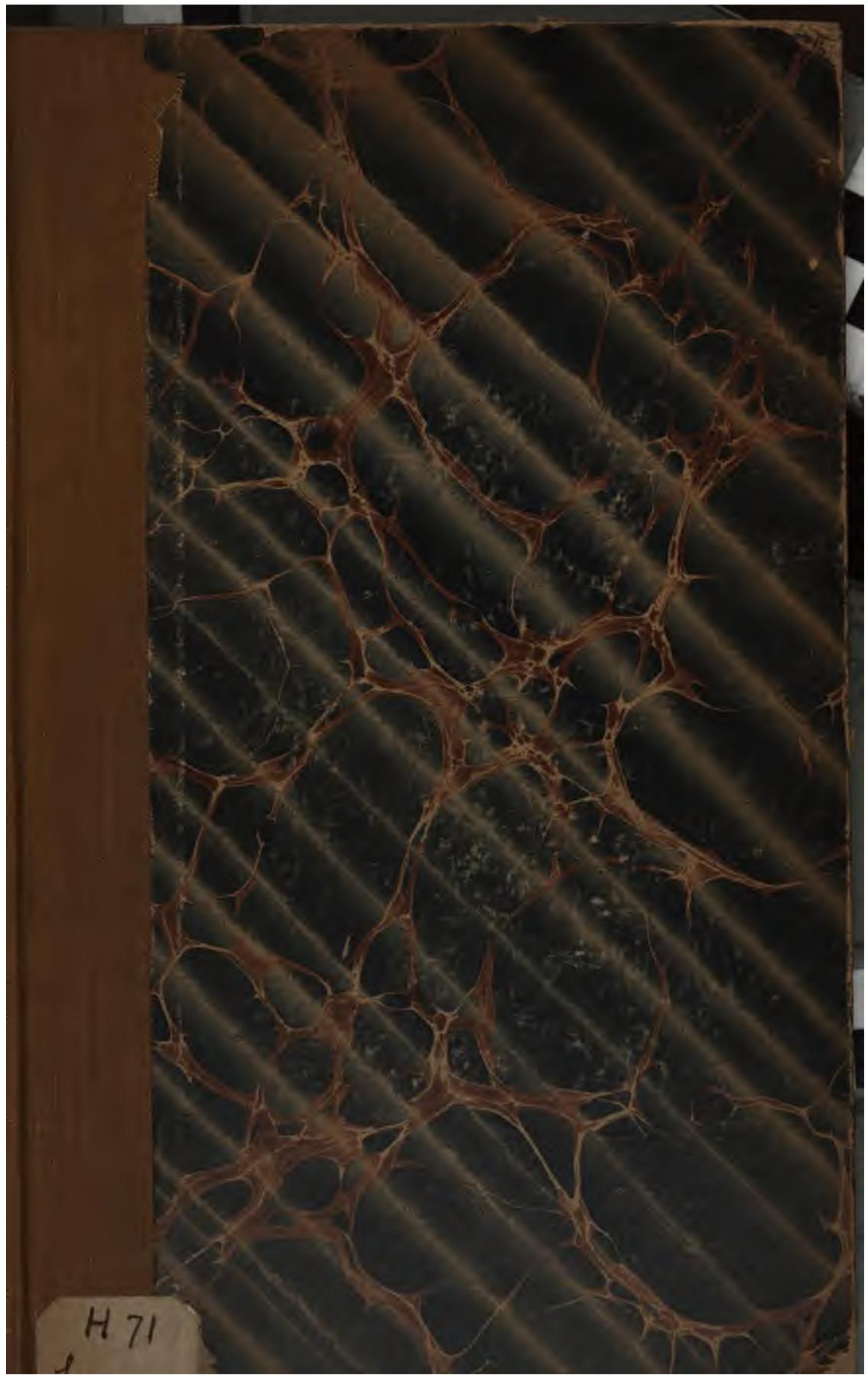
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# CAPITALISM AND COMMUNISM

BY

REV. JOHN C. LEARNED

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## CAPITALISM AND COMMUNISM.\*

All are familiar with Wordsworth's early sympathy with the French Revolution. It seemed to him the cause of the people against their oppressors, and his heart beat for liberty. At Orleans, his attention was arrested by a forlorn but delicate girl, leading a starved heifer. "It is against *that* we are fighting," said Beaupais to the poet. And this illustration of poverty in the concrete carried Wordsworth away.

And yet the physiocrats had largely realized their theories in legislation. Arthur Young, whose writings are still instructive, went from England distrustful of the tendency to increase estates in his own country, and prepossessed in favor of the small holdings of the French agriculturists. But he came back thoroughly convinced that a national polity which compels the subdivision of even hereditary lands, and makes land bear the burden of taxation, ministers to an inevitable poverty.

The people seem to have been persuaded by the political economists of that time that, as the only real and permanent basis of prosperity and power is agriculture, so the only true wealth is land. Agriculture was the only productive labor: therefore, everybody must own land, if ever so little. The competition for land in consequence became so intense that farming was reduced to its lowest condition, so that our author, referring to this form of ownership, says, "Property is the parent of poverty." All the savings of the lower class were invested in land,—land always taxed, and very often unremunerative. Farms, however small, were by law divided and subdivided among the children. In some instances, this had gone so far

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that a single fruit tree, standing on ten rods of ground or the sixteenth part of an acre, constituted a farm. The population in some districts had already increased beyond the means of comfortable subsistence. Young found much misery; and the smaller the farms, the poorer the people. As he passed into those provinces where for any cause the estates were larger, there he met with farmers who were able to introduce improved methods of cultivation, better implements and stock. They could afford to pay wages to men unemployed, and their prosperity was proportional. His conclusion, after extensive observations covering a period of several years, was that the law, instead of compelling, should limit the subdivision of lands; that mastership is just as essential to agriculture as to manufactures; and that, to effect the relief of the French people, every shadow of a tax on land should be removed. And Wordsworth's estimate of the causes of suffering in France was as inadequate as that of many a man in our time, who feels much and mistakes that for thinking; whose sympathies are right, but whose knowledge is deficient, and whose reasoning is fallacious.

Forty years later than the inferences of Young, Harriet Martineau, who was not wanting in sympathy for all suffering classes, wrote her story of *Brooke Farm*, that happy community in England which yielded, though not without complaint at first, to the enclosure of its neglected commons. The book was written to show the wastefulness of small farming and the advantage to all of having the wayside and the free village barrens, where the kine grew poor, brought under profitable cultivation, giving well-paid employment to otherwise thriftless men.

Herzen, however, in more modern times, and apparently some others, think that the Russian peasant, "disguised with dirt and brandy, has solved the question of the nineteenth century," or that something like the primitive system of the village commune is to be the panacea for all our ills. Marx talks approvingly of India, where the land is tilled in common and the produce divided among all; where

capital creates no surplus labor, and communities abide peaceful and unchanged, though dynasties fall and States dissolve. But in Russia, certainly, communism has not yet brought a form of welfare or freedom which a young nation like our own need envy. True, every male child is at birth endowed with its inalienable share of the landed property of the commune; but with it comes the land tax, which holds him and his family in an almost hopeless bondage. If he could be rid of his land, he could be rid of his tax,—of those *money-dues* which, in a large part of the empire, exceeding normal rent, are more grievous than the *labor-dues* of serfage. No matter how poor the land or whether used or not, the fixed sum assessed upon the commune must be raised. And in the later times, with the growth of manufacturing interests, the peasant has gone to the towns for employment, has turned artisan and operative, that he might get ready money to discharge his liability as member of the commune. This has more and more left tillage to women, which has not been improved; while the continuous separation of families and domestic interests has been anything but favorable to morals. Even proprietors in Northern Russia, Wallace tells us, finding land possession unprofitable, have rented their estates for what they would bring or have left their mansions to decay, while they entered upon the advantages of trade.

On the whole, it is doubtful if there has ever been any bondage more bitter than that which has had for its object to fasten men to the land or make them bear the burden of an inalienable share. So true is this, that the history of civilization has largely been that of the struggle of the people to free themselves from agriculture and from the incessant and various responsibilities for home and herd and harvest, which make up the primitive rural life. Whatever may have been its healthfulness or its needfulness to society, without capital it was a life of exposure, of scanty and precarious subsistence, of unremitting toil. It was first relieved when the great towns of trade and manufacture sprang up, to make a better market for its products and to pay ready money for all surplus labor.

It has been said that the foundation of division of labor and of trade is the separation of town and country. The "decomposition of handicrafts" began with farming. But out of the decomposition of trades springs *co-operation*. The principle is as old as that of freedom. The word is the watchword now. Let us seek, however, to understand it. What does co-operation mean? It means division of labor for the sake of economy,—to reduce the *amount* of labor. It means low cost of production. It means, up to this time, the concentration of capital and of population. If it should ever go so far as to suppress competition, then it will mean that centralization which is implied under State, or rather under international, socialism.

Whoever reads back a hundred years into our New England history reaches a time when a farmer's outfit suggests many modern industries,—the distaff as well as the plough, the spindle and shuttle and lapstone as well as the sickle and the yoke. There came a time when the noisy wheel and loom were stowed away in the stillness of the garret. The mills of Massachusetts and Rhode Island said, "We will at least take *that* burden from the farmer's wife." And many a farmer's daughter, where there was little produce and many mouths to feed, went to Lowell, glad to get ready money for a service which, on the whole, was better remunerated and less irksome and severe than that at home. By and by, the cobbling-bench and the flail went, the candle-moulds and the leach-barrel; at length, the churn and the cheese-press. Yet each of these steps was due to co-operation, to a massing of these distributed industries in factories, where more and better work could be done with the same outlay of time and strength. Now, we are told that the day is not distant when the wash-tub and cooking-stove must go. Another great division of labor, another temptation held out to capital, which is to land us in the paradise of co-operative housekeeping! Let the day be hastened!

It need hardly be shown here how essential to co-operation is capital. Somebody must build the factory and supply the machinery for the new industry. And then the

offer of steady employment, with fixed and prompt wages, was sufficient to bring from great distances those wanting work or whose tastes led them to the shops and mills. In the small towns, the citizens exerted themselves as earnestly to have factories established near them as they did later to secure railroads. They risked stock in them, gave lands, and exempted them from taxation. There can be no doubt that they ministered to the general prosperity.

It is easy to see that this gradual separation of agriculture from manufacture, the removal of many rural domestic industries and their concentration in cities, was the beginning of a social revolution. When every twenty pounds of wool used in the family, or the year's consumption of any other product, goes to the market, to the factory, and to the store for final distribution, a new order of transactions is introduced, a radical change comes in the world of trade. Out of this state of things spring the social and political questions which now press hard for answer upon the American republic.

Yet no backward step is to be taken. The solution is not behind us, but before. This stage was inevitable under the law of social evolution. It must lead on to a higher one. Says a pessimistic writer, "You sever the distaff and the plough, the spindle and the yoke, and you get factories and poorhouses, credit and panics, two hostile nations, agricultural and commercial." But as, in the beginning, the division of labor was not the offspring of enmity, but was born of the spirit of mutual helpfulness, so we see no occasion for a declaration of civil war now between great related interests, to end only in their destruction. Nor do we look for any relief in that Asiatic indolence of will or dulness of invention which in the Hindu weaver still takes an order to weave a web, and from the raw material, which perhaps he has raised himself, goes patiently through the whole process by hand, with infinite squandering of time and toil. Is he by any certainty better off than the English factory hand, who stands by his looms or watches a spinning jenny of two thousand two hundred spindles, each

spindle turning off ten pounds of yarn in a day of as many hours? We will do what we can to reduce the poorhouses, we will diffuse as fast as we can that knowledge among the people which is the only cure for panics; but to look with any hope towards primitive or Asiatic forms of industry, to prophesy any millennium for civilization in the land-polity of Russia or Japan, we are forbidden by every evidence and law of progress. Let the division of labor and the consequent cheapening of commodities go on. Let invention quicken and multiply processes of production, until (to use a figure of Harriet Martineau) a man can build six dwelling-houses in a day. There is certainly some way in which this knowledge of the laws, this command over the forces of nature, must contribute to the welfare of the race.

But here hangs the black and foreboding picture painted by the socialist, with all its grim details of the growing inequalities of human condition, dim vales of poverty in contrast to shining mountains of wealth, multitudes of the unemployed asking alms, slaves of capital where "the machine [as Emerson says] unmakes the man." Free competition is represented as simply man-hunting and misery. Individualism is might overcoming right. Something must hold the strong man in check. If it cannot be done, all must unite to strangle him in his cradle. Or, to state it very temperately in the words of a recent writer, "The evolution of the race has reached that point where the supremacy of the individual is neither needed nor desired."

The new attempt, however, to disparage individualism in theory and wreck it in practice, though doubtless men believe that thereby the good of society is to be served, is the revival of an old assault upon human freedom. In the rage against capital and its abuses has been revealed a drift towards despotism, the most unmistakable that has ever threatened our country. Let us admit all the truth there is in the charges which socialism brings against capital,—and surely no one can shut his eyes to the evils and suffering into which all those periodically fall who are not wise enough and strong enough to make provision for the day of

enforced idleness or scarcity ; but in that “crusade against poverty,” which being interpreted is a *crusade against property*, we shall not find the remedy that we seek. Or we shall find it at a cost so great as to leave life little worth the living for those who have any wit or energy left.

For the time, men seem to have transferred their faith from individual human nature to collective human nature. The individual is less and less: some organization, the State or race, is more and more. We are told outright that the species is the end, the individual is only the means. We are to give others that confidence which we are forbidden to have in ourselves. This is the surrender of personal liberty. And though this attitude cannot last very long, and the reaction is sure to come, yet under adverse circumstances it may be delayed until generations have passed under its yoke of restraint and anguish. Any loss of faith in individual manhood is radical. Not long will men work for the race, for collective humanity, when this nerve is cut. Hence, we see how this skepticism in certain quarters so quickly undermines all associative effort; or it maintains coalitions for oppressive measures only,—to put down the individual or destroy some rival interest. But just because the individual and individual liberty are too sacred to be sacrificed to any theory of the general good,—are too essential to the plan of nature,—therefore, out of all forms of despotic government, sooner or later springs anarchy. This is the reason why in every labor union, seeking to destroy the natural competition of labor and of choice, this dragon lies coiled.

Abuses there are, of a very serious sort, attaching to individual ambition and greed and violation of the rights of others. Let the individual guilty of crime be brought to justice; but let the principle of individualism suffer no harm. We want more individualism, not less. We must work out the conclusion that it is not inconsistent with the new civilization of public schools and manifold industries. It must coexist with a division of labor so minute as to be still undreamt of, with an economy of production

by no means reached. Yet we shall never realize this if, losing faith in individual effort, we delegate all responsibility to the State. The State can help, and in certain emergencies is indispensable. But a few shrewd managers can make the State's action far from disinterested. And have we not seen politics made use of for vile personal ends, presuming upon that habitual indifference to public matters which verifies the old adage that "what is everybody's business is nobody's business"?

The State must see to it that personal freedom is guarded; that in the lower ranks of life, and that in the early years of life, mind and body are protected and trained. Civilization is to lift man up to the power of rational choice. Education is to multiply his chances, to endow him with the supreme gift of versatility, and to give the mind some outlook and hope, though the hand be joined to its mechanical task.

There are disorders connected with the private ownership of lands, wheat, factories, and the facilities of transportation. But to make the occasional or even frequent abuse of these rights the ground for the destruction of them—to abolish *property owning* to cure *property speculation*, or inequality—is "to pour out the baby with the bath," is to fall into the riot-breeding theory that all capital represents wrong, so much unrequited toil. Had it not been for the free play of a wise individual energy, wealth would never have been accumulated. There would not be even the few dollars *per capita* to distribute, which now make up the capital of civilization. There would have remained to this day the communism and equality of the savage. The whole race would have been poor and within a few weeks of starvation. Karl Marx says that any parcelling out of the soil or scattering the means of production, whether tools or money, in private ownership,—in short, all descending to small proprietorship,—is primitive, and, in the words of Pecquerri, is "to decree universal mediocrity." No doubt the individual must more and more work with others. He must learn to do that, and still save his

individualism. That is what any true co-operation means. He will work for others, while he does the best he can for himself. As a rule to-day, in all gainful pursuits, the small business man gets less than the wage-worker,—less money and less time, with vastly more care and risk. This favors the concentration of industries, which will be limited only by the limits of invention and the capacity of directing minds. Let not the State, then, by any law close the free school which educates the directing mind. Let not the State seek to make such power superfluous. It need not recall from the Middle Ages those obsolete statutes which designated how many acres a man might occupy, how many sheep he might own, how many tools he might use, or how many laborers he might employ. It will retain (as it always has had) the right to say, within constitutional definition, to what use a man's possessions shall be put; but to place a limit on the amount of his wealth, whatever its use, and when by individual wisdom and just administration it serves the highest wants of the community, would be to weaken the ameliorating agencies of an advancing civilization.

The individual life is transient: the community life is perpetual. The worst stock-jobber or despot endures only for a generation; but the social order is permanent, or changes slowly except by force or revolution. A rank and noxious weed can be destroyed, or will live its life and perish; but to poison the soil of society, so that neither pine nor pulse will grow, is insane. No doubt the freeman, as such, will often try poverty or embark in those ventures and indulge in that improvidence which inevitably lead to it. He must be allowed to do it without being legally restrained, if he is to gain either any financial or moral standing. Contrary to Mr. Ruskin, he must even be allowed to offer work for half-price, to relieve his necessities, until he learns the lesson of common sense and of social progress,—that foresight is the only remedy for dependence and failure, that only willing privation in time of plenty can secure provision in time of want. And he must be taught self-respect, under which “the leanest liberty is preferable to the fattest submission.”

Something has been done and much more is to be attempted through what are known as co-operative and profit-sharing associations. As schools for the development of energy and of thrift, under successful leadership, they may render excellent service. How far they will be able to mitigate the present evils of society or solve its problems, remains to be tested. It is safe to say that much will depend upon the spirit in which they are undertaken, and their capacity to deal with the lower grades of workmen. When organized in opposition to monopoly with the hope of building up a greater monopoly, when prompted by the desire to destroy old and rich corporations in order to give new ones with borrowed capital their place, having some scheme of making poor men and wage-workers the trustees of great financial institutions instead of capitalists with experience,—in short, the demand for a new deal, with some method of putting down competition by a fiercer competition, of curing selfishness with an intenser selfishness, because it is the incentive of a larger number of stockholders,—this spirit will hardly alleviate the bitter industrial conditions of to-day. It may increase them rather in proportion as by a severer process of selection, the most enterprising managers are able to draw to themselves all the best workmen in any business. It is possible that co-operative or profit-sharing associations may present examples of the most destructive competition, driving similar and weaker associations to the wall as they succeed. Yet, surely, no one can read the history of co-operation by Holyoake, or enter into the motives of such men as Owen of New Lanark, of Godin of Guise, without having his hopes heightened and his vision extended over the possibilities of the race.

The mistake of Owen was that men were to start upon conditions of equality: they were to have "all things in common," and to continue in that equality to the end. The mistake of Holyoake was that equality, not existing from the beginning, was to be attained as a result; whereas no equality of human beings is possible under a democratic form of government, or desirable under any other. When-

ever democracy invokes the law to prevent inequality, it will have entered upon the act of self-destruction. Democracy is free development for men, or it is a failure.

The later forms of co-operation and profit-sharing present the strong motives of accumulation and advancement to individual effort and ambition, and may therefore attract those who are influenced by these desires. The leaders will be likely to do also what Lord Brougham advised Owen to do, but which he did not,—namely, “pick your men.” They will reject, from the start, those who may flock to them to exchange poor service for sure pay.

What shall we say of the deepening dread of increasing population, of mouths multiplying faster than the hands can find work or bread? The question is mainly a moral one. No plan of co-operation settles it. Socialism is weak on that side. It shows us, with endless reiteration of complaint, the struggle and destitution of toiling masses. It takes for its text the pale, stunted operative or the tramp. It says machinery has made population redundant: this surplus labor, these mill-hands and miners waiting their turn to work, or wearing out their lives, are the industrial reserve for the use of the monster capital, which fattens as the ever-increased crowding for place forces wages down. Socialism has reached no agreement as to the cure of this diseased tendency; but, in its extremity, it affirms that all institutions thus far are to blame, and that it is the duty as it is within the power of the *proletariat* to overthrow them.

The case is bad, but by no means hopeless; only, it will not be reached by a nostrum. Many agencies will minister to the social health, and we cannot doubt that what is called the labor movement will do its share. The workingman deserves to be heard, and will be. In spite of the gloomy picture of him so often painted, he is neither disabled nor prohibited from pleading his own cause. Spite of the desperate straits in which invention and capital have placed him, there is no civilized nation on the globe where the lot of the laborer is not better than in any past age; and the richer and more prosperous the civilization, the better for him,—more

to eat and to wear, better shelter, multiplied chances of manhood. Moreover, no man of any rank speaks to workingmen now with the sneer or the brutality that was universal on the part of the rich, as Holyoake tells us, in England fifty years ago.

The question of population, its distribution and support, the chief and paramount of social problems, is to be solved by gospel rather than by law, by the diffusion of good will rather than by the grasp of force. We are told that the land on which human beings can be sustained is limited. It is no more limited than everything else is limited,—than silver or corn. Uninhabited and idle millions of acres are waiting to be redeemed by human labor, invention, and ownership. The bar to use and occupation is only that which debars men from all other possessions conditioned on the exercise of effort and skill. To say nothing of land beyond our domain and in other continents, there is not a State in this Union where there are not waste lands waiting to be brought into a compensating cultivation by new and improved methods, and which any free man of industry and economy may possess, if he wishes. Land is only limited in this country by the thriftlessness and ignorance which permit its powers to lie dormant instead of fattening cattle and growing grain. Government has everywhere crossed it with highways, to make it accessible and to increase its profitability. Capital has built railways to cheapen the transportation of products and commodities. And in the realm of mechanical invention, chemistry, and costly agricultural experiments, the way is opening for the settlement of deserts with the superfluous thousands of overcrowded towns.

Hand in hand, however, with these physical and mechanical gains must proceed a corresponding education among the people. They must be prepared to see the significance of these scientific results, and to take advantage of the opportunities which spring out of them. As the great system of co-operative production and commerce enlarges, there will be such a simplification and division of labor that less and less preparation and skill will be needed to fill the

great number of places in any branch of industry. But less and less must men be permitted to content themselves with earning a bare and precarious subsistence. They must have education to relieve the tedium of toil, to make the dry task of the hand endurable, and to keep hope alive. It remains now as always that "the proper study of mankind is man," not wealth,—the whole man, and how to meet and deal with him, and to make the most of him under all the conditions in which we find him. That is why the science of wealth implies the science of poverty; and we finally discover that the worst evil in society to remove, because more fundamental, is *the unequal distribution of knowledge rather than the unequal distribution of riches.*

The penalty of having a dull or uninventive mind is to do an uninstructive task. Yet, if the quick mind finds a lifeless routine the path of duty, it must see fitness in its faithful performance until some new avenue opens. Command over the food-supply in all well-governed and prosperous countries increases from generation to generation: we must see to it that command over the facilities of knowledge, over the chances which education gives, is lost to no class of men.

We are often told that we must save the honest laborer from competition with the beggar and the tramp, who, Sir Walter Scott said in his day, fared better than the hard-working peasantry whose porridge they shared. This is right. But the only way to save him from competition with the pauper is to make the pauper as rare as possible by a State policy which sees to it that in no community, and least of all in our cities, are the means wanting to give every child due discipline of mind and teach him the uses of his hands. The question what to do with the unemployed will solve itself, so far as it is capable of solution, when we cease to connive at measures which tend to multiply the unemployed,—whether by false early training in the public school, or by unions which can make it profitable for men to be out of work; whether by the endowment of great charity institutions, or by hope of pensions or sine-

cures from the government. We shall save the self-respecting worker from competition with the drifting adventurer, just as we shall save the intelligent from competition with the brutish and ignorant,—by reducing brutishness and ignorance; by placing a high social premium upon those qualities which make up character and manhood.

Munificent gifts are now made to educate those who appreciate education, and who are able and willing to educate themselves. Men must yet give greatly and wisely to educate those who are so low in the social scale as to be helpless; who, without an aiding and even a compulsory hand, will never see any open door into wholesome, provident, honest self-support. More important even than our higher institutions of learning are schools of manual training, where the thousands of neglected children of the poor, the multiplying waifs of our cities, shall gain at least those rudiments of knowledge, those habits of steady occupation, and those elementary triumphs of skill, which excite the hope of respectable independence.

Whatever may have been the homogeneity of the social life in the beginning, it is now very complex; and the solution of its problems is less simple than either a bitter pessimism or a hasty enthusiasm supposes. It is not easy to analyze and estimate the winds above and the currents below, which roughen the sea of our social world. Each observer states the general drift as it seems to him. Yet, whatever view is gained, it is comparatively easy to excite men's feelings, it is difficult to make men think. It is easier to rouse the passions than to decree justice. Latterly, we have been treated to a literature of complaint and social dissatisfaction. The contented have been overlooked in the attempt to pacify the querulous. Agitation has been organized, and revolution not only predicted but openly threatened. The representations of the extent and distress of poverty have been so magnified as to be misleading, while its causes have been falsely stated. Class interest has risen above national interest, so that we see a truth in Renan's suggestion that "socialism takes the lead, when patriotism grows weak."

We conclude that there are three principles which are never to be lost sight of in our treatment of these themes. There are three conditions which are to be maintained, both in theory and in practice, for the health of society.

1. The first pertains to the individual. It is a subjective, an *a priori* principle, a true intuition. It demands the preservation of the instinct of *personal liberty*. The INDIVIDUAL must be saved. This does not mean equality: neither nature nor human nature works in that direction. Inequality is not an evil, but only *fixed* inequality,—some hopeless hindrance to development and growth. Hence it is that men must refuse to give up freedom. Demands and pledges of all oath-bound and creed-bound associations are essentially feudal and undemocratic. No contract with capital, or with any coalition against capital, must destroy the right of personal judgment and choice, or put a rational man at the mercy of another's caprice. For the sake of individual protection, the law itself may interfere to invalidate all contracts which bind men under forms of destructive oppression. Individualism, when fatally threatened in school or factory or labor-union, is to be rescued,—to be snatched up by the locks wherever drowning, and defended in its search for opportunity to exercise its powers. Though there must be a large indulgence of contrasted conditions, not even for bread may a man sell himself into perpetual slavery.

2. The second principle is objective and *a posteriori*. It relates to material wealth, to property. This must be governed by the law of *general utility*, as the true means of promoting the greatest freedom. In the last analysis, the State —that is, *the people*—owns all. It may take whatever it needs for the public good. It may do what it will with the possessions within its limits,—with wind, as in Holland, or water, as in Egypt, with land or lucre, or even with life itself.

The fashion now is to attribute the evils of our time, the poverty and largely the vices of the age, to the influence and example of the rich, to the rivalry and greed of mill-

ionaires. There could be no greater mistake. Just as well attribute drought and dearth in Dakota to the accumulation of waters in the Atlantic. No doubt there are evils directly traceable to the unprincipled conduct of gambling and competing kings of capital. Business confidence is imperilled by their operations, and small earnings are swallowed up in their dishonest schemes. But the poor man suffers chiefly from the temptations and rivalries within his own class, from those who stand next to him in the struggle for life. It is this unavoidable exposure and pressure below that throws up millionaires to the surface, almost against their wills, as water pushes up a cork.

Whatever be the truth of Rousseau's remark,—“Where there is no luxury there is no poverty,”—large accumulations of capital are the reservoirs of supply, where even the improvident and thriftless, in the day of scarcity, may exchange labor for the necessities of life. Nor is there any sign that the time of quick or large fortunes is passing by, though undoubtedly questions concerning the use of wealth will more and more cross those touching merely its increase. And when in a democratic nation that class of individual men competent to administer their own fortunes is no longer found, it will be in vain that wealth is put under the jurisdiction of the State; for it is an axiom that “he who is unfit to manage is unfit to direct the manager.”

3. Bunsen said that the last word of God in history was *Humanity*. Humanity over all, humanity everywhere,—this is the third great principle of social economy, which means that every action must have reference to the welfare of all; that all laws, however inevitable or cruel they seem, should have such mitigation as we can wisely devise. The laws of supply and demand, of an increasing population pressing against the means of subsistence, of the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest, of man as the creature of circumstances,—these are not all, however imperiously they proclaim their power. No doubt, the weak must go to the wall. Sickness, accident, and age assail the best. The feeble-minded fall behind, and death comes to

all. We make much of "the survival of the fittest"; but the truth is that no individual survives beyond a brief moment of time. All perish. And, when we speak of kinds or classes, we know that only that kind or class does or ought to survive, which can successfully cope with the conditions of its existence.

The claim of the socialistic agitator is usually that society is dying,—dying at the bottom; that the lower orders are fast being consumed for the fattening of the wealthy. But Marx asserts that the *proletariat* is multiplying with fearful rapidity; that the vast population of wage-workers, made redundant and fierce by machinery and capital, is preparing to spring upon the constantly lessening number of the rich for their final destruction,—although, like the Kilkenny cats in their voracity, these are fast eating each other up. But whether society is dying at the bottom or the top, or wherever either the weak or the strong perish, humanity has somewhat to say and do. It teaches us that none in the last extremity, though they suffer by their own fault, are to die unfriended and in the desolation of neglect. Humanity must seek to mitigate the blow of fate. It must give sympathy where that is lacking; it must share its gains at the cry of hunger and need. Nevertheless, humanity, however widely extended its charity or good-will, cannot reverse the law of nature, as some have feared. Still, the unfit must perish.

Humanity must mean justice. And, when once we learn that the individual's interest is the community's interest also, we shall finally abandon the maxim — which even Adam Smith wrote to make obsolete — that "one man's gain is another man's loss." We shall cease to call capital, or the profits of business, so much withheld or stolen from the wages of labor. We shall no longer attempt to make all masters of capitalistic production, or owners of land, appear like heartless monsters feeding upon the people; or hold the millionaire responsible for the destitution of a million poor; or seek to make any man who has a dollar in his pocket or a cake unconsumed feel that some one else is so

much the worse off, and that he holds it from some possible starving wretch who deserves it more.

Nature is impartial and bountiful ; she offers always a fair and living share of her products to her children. Yet a "fair share," whether received as gift or earned by wit or work, means still a share limited by competition. A living share must often be reserved for some whom reckless greed would overlook or displace. In our time there are perils and tragedies, as there have always been in the history of the race. Each nation is another experiment in the art of applying justice and of winning prosperity and happiness for the people. There is certainly nothing to discourage in our land and generation ; there is much to fill it with confident expectation. The spirit of humanity never brooded over the turbulent waters of any age of the past as over the swaying, striving interests of modern civilization. Men died for truth and country and freedom in the ancient times ; more men to-day than ever the world saw live for their fellow-men. They gain, and gain justly, not that they may save only, but that they may lend and share and do good. They respond to the calls of distress and ignorance. They adorn and endow their land with beauty and goodwill. Trade has its heroisms, the market its book of martyrs. Many an employer and laboring man, many a capitalist and wage-worker, has given thought to these questions of right and duty, has made costly sacrifices in behalf of that larger justice and that better brotherhood which even now, like the gleam of morning, breaks prophetic upon our sight. Futile as are any of the panaceas taken singly, which are now so passionately urged for the cure of society's ills, this very search after remedies so sincerely pursued is a favorable omen. Some are tempted to maintain, with certain French communists, that "all property is theft"; others, that any system of debt and credit, private or national, is the root of all evil. Ruskin says that interest is indefensible; Marx would abolish capital; Godin would substitute association for wages; while Henry George sees pauperism and crime disappear with the destruction of rent. But, although

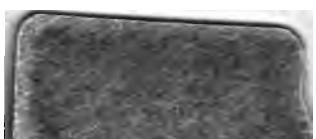
there is no sufficient evidence that either the anarchic socialism of Bakunin or Most, or the imperial and despotic socialism of Bismarck, is the goal of satisfaction and prosperity; although there is no likelihood that either the aristocratic socialism of Ruskin or the democratic socialism of George will cure our woes or make it possible to escape risk or relax our vigilance in the warfare of life,— yet all of these may be profitably studied both for warning and for example. Each has some contribution to make in solving the great problem before us, which is the reconciliation of our individual and collective interests, the just administration of our personal and common life.







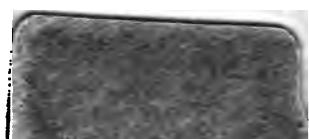
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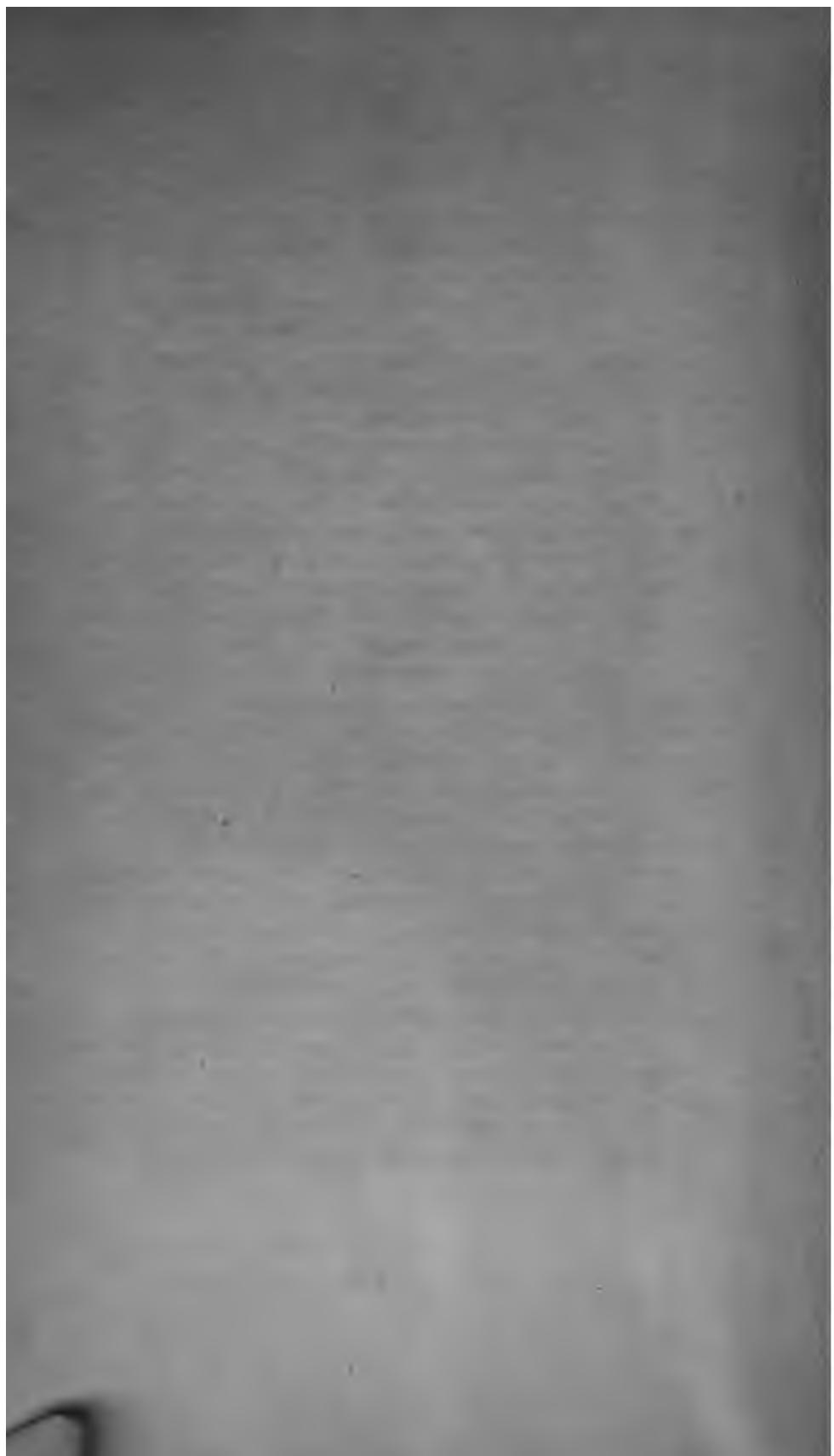






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